/46 cont./

iguarayas, and trupillo pods, as well as in gathering divi-divi, which is sold in the port towns for export; their labor is used for portering (women's work): they carry on their backs or shoulders the collected fruit, the firewood, and the water when the family does not own the necessary animals.

When ten or over the girl, taught by her elder kinswomen, starts to handle the spindle and loom, work in which she perfects herself during the seclusion of her initiation.

In general her occupations during childhood are affected by the economic and social position of her relatives, since a child of a well-to-do family will spend her childhood playing, without occupying herself with domestic chores except occasionally, since she is not considered as a small-sized adult as happens among poor families, but as a little girl, and she is treated as such. Certain light duties might be imposed but never a definite or clear-cut responsibility. She is expected to obey, mainly so that she recognize the authority of her elders, but when she enters the prepubertal age her mother and relatives start to take a more personal interest in her and to think it to be the opportune time to start training her in the duties pertaining to her position and her sex, teaching her all the household occupations that she will later improve on and become expert in during her seclusion, which will last longer the greater the wealth of the family.

Food, sleep, dress, and ornaments. Even before weaning, when this is delayed beyond the first year, or at times before, the child starts being fed adult food. By that time he asks his mother for food and she gives it to him, when he is small, more generously than she can at a later date; but later on he himself looks for it and, in order to satisfy his hunger, frequently steals food from his mother that she has put away, and this obliges the mother to hide it. (Cf. Punishment, Chap. II.)

The apportioning of food in a Guajiro household is done by the mother, who serves each one his share, starting with the husband, afterward the children, she being the last to eat. If she has a preference for a child, she shows it at this time by

/56 cont./

The duration of the seclusion was longer in past years, longer than at the present time, and there still may be found cases among rich families where this period is extended to five years, but normally among poor families it may last only one month or even less, and in the middle-income group it averages six months to one year.

Once the family in conclave or the mother and the aunts decide to terminate the seclusion, the final feast is given, in which the girl appears and behaves as an adult. She is presented as such, and she is given the opportunity to occupy the place of, and to take part in the activities corresponding to, a marriageable young girl. Frequently at this feast some interested guest may offer to buy her for his wife.

The news of the "coming out" of the young girl is rapidly spread throughout the peninsula. All the friends of the family arrive at the feast, as also the important people of the region, who have been invited beforehand, and, very specially, all the well-to-do marriageable men. If the woman is of estimable qualities and talents, /57/ those who are looking for a wife for the first time attend. The family preparations for such a feast are very complete, according to their status. There is an abundance of drinks for all, men and women, music for dancing, horse racing when they want to give more splendor to the gathering, and slaughtering of animals. The maternal relatives make their donations and meet to help their relatives in the fulfillment of the customary norms of hospitality. The more important visitors are received in the house itself and given preferential attention, according to their standing. The girl is bathed for the last time at dawn with the traditional earthen jugs of water, and her hair is cut in the fashion, that is to say, leaving it a short, disheveled mop. This is done by an experienced woman of eminence who can transmit her excellent personal qualities to the girl. The latter carefully keeps her hair in her bag with her intimate personal possessions and later places it under fresh cow dung with the hope that the

/131 cont./

844 wrapped in clothes either specially prepared for the event or improvised. The umbilical cord has already been tied by the midwife, and in the cases of unaided childbirth the mother does this herself, even cutting it with a splinter of wood and tying it as best she can with a vegetable fiber.

844 The midwife or the mother takes the afterbirth out of the house and throws it some distance away (a custom of Upper La Guajira) so that it shall be lost. They believe that if they bury it the newborn baby will have bad luck, will sicken and slowly die practically by wasting away. Nevertheless, there are regions, as in Uribia, where the custom prevails of burying it outside the house; in other parts, as in Jarara, the usual way is to put it under a fireplace /fogón/, which is then lit to give strength to the child and ward off infantile sickness.

845 When the delivery shows signs of complications or is abnormally delayed, the male consanguineous relatives in the house are asked to help by lifting up the woman by her armpits during the spasms of labor pains and by this means accelerate the process. Her husband may help at these moments, but at the present time children, youths, and virgins are not allowed to be present, although there are regions, such as Jarara, where the woman gives birth in a passageway or under the enramada /bough-covered shelter/, in full view of everyone, even her small children. There is no concern at all over this matter; childbirth is considered a normal phenomenon and unmarried women may also be present. /132/

[554] Rich and powerful women go to Maracaibo to have their children when their previous births have been difficult, as there they have clinics and doctors at their disposal.

844 Midwives. The midwife is a woman, usually married, who has lived her own professional experiences and has had further experience among her consanguineous relatives. Practice, inborn ability, and empirical knowledge of the phenomenon give these women a certain technique which makes them so famous that their services are greatly in demand. Some of them also know what care and attention the pregnant woman should receive as regards

/167 cont./

his maternal uncle, and his most immediate relatives in the family circle, but he is required to obey those legal forms which offer him the protection and mutual aid of the same relatives from whom he is becoming emancipated. This freedom is limited for the male to economic independence and his first marriage. For the woman, relative emancipation from the family comes with marriage; even after being initiated she must submit, perhaps more than before, to the prescriptions and orders of her relatives; but on being married she becomes somewhat free from direct family control, although she also has to respect new cultural patterns and a new authority: that of her husband.

Once the daughters are married the mother, although she may try to exercise dominion over the running of the homes that these are establishing, must in any case make her voice heard; her influence is felt through the conduct of the daughters. If the new couple goes to live with the mother, according to the traditional form of matrilocal residence, or if the newly married sons take their brides to their maternal home, a common occurence among mestizos, the mother does not hand over the reins of family administration, either to her daughters or to her daughters-in-law. When she dies and each one of these forms her own home, each will take on the direction of the family administration and will follow the same norms. With respect to the matter of marital authority, we abstain from repeating the observations already made and refer the reader to the chapter, Marriage.

The authority that Guajiro fathers have over their children depends on their position before them. They are not considered consanguineous relatives, and consequently their authority is very limited. The children may not take their fathers' side for this reason, but they must respect them as older persons. The father is limited in his rights by the maternal uncle who takes his place and by the mother. He may not hurt his children because he has no rights over them, since they are not of his blood. Nevertheless, in a certain way he

[44 cont.]
him on his journey and which remain his only possessions, since the rest will be distributed among his heirs — take on the quality of untouchables.

2. The poisoned arrow. The second sacrifice about which we gathered information has a greater importance than the previous one for two reasons: first, because it is the sacrifice of a human being, and second, because it is linked to a series of ceremonies set in motion to obtain a certain end, the deadly power of the imára, or poisoned arrow, or better said, the magic arrow.

This sacrifice, so far as we could observe, is no longer practiced in La Guajira. According to the information gathered, it was practiced exclusively by the Kusina Indians, inhabitants of the sierra of that name. They were bellicose Indians, warriors, robbers, and animal stealers, who kept the other communities of the peninsula in an incessant state of tension by their attacks and evil-doings. We think it interesting to point out here that these Indians, commonly known as Cocina, according to all the information obtained did not constitute in themselves a separate cultural group. Their language was the same as that of the other Guajiro; their customs were relatively the same, and their physical type identical. Everything seems to indicate that they were no more than social outcasts, all those who, for crimes committed and not paid for in accordance with established laws, had found it necessary to unite themselves into societies outside the law. The question is not entirely clear, and it will be difficult to make it so because Kusina Indians are no longer found in La Guajira.

Bows and arrows stood out among the arms used by the Guajiro, (We say "stood" out because now they chiefly use rifles of foreign make). One of these arrows, which they call poisoned, bears the name of imára. The shaft of this arrow is made of a thin piece of wood taken from the tree called parára and measures approximately 80 centimeters in length. At the upper end of this sharpened shaft is placed poison of a ray or the bone of a poisonous serpent. This imára is what the Kusina Indians used as a last resort in their battles with Whites or with

[104 cont.]

226 751 [177 184] Never again during our visit did we come across this type of magic object, which leads us to believe that it does not belong to the Guajiro cultural whole, but that it is due rather to the influence of the mulattoes of the coast who, as is well known, are extremely superstitious.

1756 1778 Charms used to call spirits. The use of these charms, to which we have referred on other occasions, is limited to shamans. They use them to facilitate the arrival of their protector spirits when they are in a curing trance or are carrying out any of the functions related to their status. Up to the present we have not arrived at a satisfactory explanation of their influence on the spirits, but we might now bring together the few data we do have. One of the female shamans who served us as informant and who [776] came from the Sierra [de] Jarara possessed charms to attract her spirits. She explained to us that as those spirits are assistants, some to young shamans, some to old ones, the charms to facilitate the arrival of their spirits are also of two classes: for young shamans and the other for old ones.

[824] The charm is made from the leaf of a plant called in Guajiro morõno, which is found in abundance on Itojoro Hill. A woman expert in such articles makes them there [105] by grinding the leaves of the plant to a paste and shaping this into a rounded form which she keeps in a small bag of red thread. The larger ones are reserved for the older shamans, and the others, combined with some of the former, are for the younger.

1778 1789 [305 532] The guará or guale. The guará or guale, difficult to find at present, is a kind of idol made from solid gold or silver and of which only a few examples exist as they are no longer made. This small idol is an anthropomorphic representation in fetal position, and it does not seem to be an autochthonous product of the Guajiro as they themselves assert that these idols come from their [173] distant ancestors, by which they mean the Arhuaco of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.

This fetish is known sometimes by the name Mareiwa, a divinity or spirit similar to the idea of God but which appears to be nothing else than the spirit of Rain, as we shall see further ahead (cf. "Mareiwa and Wanurú").

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

great ring and several of them were wiping their mouths in evident satisfaction—presumably having just been regaled with some drink.

The drum thundered a long time in vain before a young Indian stepped into the ring, removed his cloak and sandals and began to walk round in a circle—a challenge to the members of the fair sex.

Almost at once a girl appeared in the ring; removed her sandals and held her tunic spread wide with her hands. The two then began dancing: he in front, she a few yards behind. Suddenly the man gave a shout and the tempo increased. Turning swiftly the girl came sweeping down towards the man who danced away, moving backwards. She must try to get close enough to tramp on his feet and make him fall, but she must not barge him. If she managed to make her partner fall, there was great jubilation, and then a new couple took the stage. Otherwise, the girl would probably challenge her partner to a few more turns, while he answered contemptuously:

'Fetch your little sister.' (Inferring that she would manage better.)

In this way a dance continues without interruption, couple following couple. It could go on for weeks.

The well-bred Indian considers the chichamaya the only suitable dance. The monks also approved of it, since it was perfectly decent, the two dancers remaining apart the whole time. The dance is not genuinely Indian, containing both Spanish and African features, but even in its present form it retains its religious-magical significance and is part of the ritual used in certain family ceremonies and on other important occasions.

The dance of the kid is a pure folk dance. It is really a whole complex of games, dances and typical fertility rites. The good families do not allow their daughters to attend them. The law's strict sexual prohibition does not apply to those taking part in the dance of the kid, who enjoy an otherwise forbidden erotic licence. This is not approved of by the well-to-do, who still hold by the rule that a bride should be a virgin, since it can have an effect on the bride-price.

8:Armstrong & Métraux E-4 (no date) 1948
SC13 Goajiro SC13

584 minus an amount considered equivalent for the sexual right he had exer-
Barc cised. If a woman dies in her first childbirth the husband may demand
583 the full return of the bride price (Simons, 1885, p. 792, however, states that the wife's relatives demand compensation from the husband).
584 Adultery entails divorce with full return of the bride price. It rarely
837 occurs, however, as the wife will be treated badly by her own relatives.
At his death a man's wives are inherited by his brother, and next by his
587 sister's sons; the women may avoid this by making a payment equivalent
768 to their bride price. If he is of the Catholic faith his children may claim
189 to be his legal heirs, which leads to conflict with the maternal nephews.
(See Social Organization, p. 374.)

542 The influence of women in political affairs is sometimes noticeable.
622 There are cases of female chiefs, and women are respected enough so as to be able to intervene and stop brawls.

Death.—Funerals are accompanied by festivities which last days or even
784 weeks, according to the wealth of the family. There are some differences
Barc in the funeral ceremonies which are apparently associated with the par-
189 ticular sibs. These funeral feasts afford the best opportunity for display of wealth, and more than 1,000 head of livestock may be butchered. Every mourner who comes to the feast contributes animals for slaughter and continues to do so as long as he cares to remain. After the mourning period, marked by weeping and lamenting interspersed with drinking and feasting, the corpse, which has lain in a hammock slung from the rafters,
789 is sewn up in hides by the women (men may not touch a dead body) and carried to the cemetery of the tribe. For a year or so, the body may be temporarily consigned to a shallow grave marked by a pile of stones. Food and drink are often placed in the grave, and, if the deceased had been a warrior, his bows and arrows are put in. A year or two later the bones
764 are exhumed and reburied in a large urn. The exhumation is generally
765 done at night and is accompanied by a feast. The remains are carried in a funeral procession to the dead person's birthplace, where they are buried in the family's own cemetery. The funeral urn is placed in a vertical position with the narrow neck of the jar protruding above ground to permit the free entry and exit of the spirit and to allow the remains of other members of the family to be added from time to time. A cactus hedge surrounds the cemetery, and in wet weather half a calabash is placed over the opening of each jar to keep out the rain. Whenever two relatives of a recently deceased person meet, they bow to the ground, shouting and groaning, for several minutes. (For a slightly different account of the burial of a rich man, see Simons, 1885, p. 792.)

751 If a person is stricken with smallpox the whole tribe moves away, only
186 the family of the sick person remaining. When the death occurs they bury the body below the floor and leave the hut over the grave.